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Statement submitted by Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

The Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, in special consultative status since 1996, welcomes this opportunity to address the high level segment of the Economic and Social Council on 'Eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions through promoting sustainable development, expanding opportunities and addressing related challenges.' The 2030 Agenda urges that it is possible to end poverty in our lifetime. Our organization is dedicated to this goal in its ministries in 74 countries throughout the world. We applaud the United Nations in its efforts to continuously bring forward the issue of poverty eradication on behalf of the people furthest behind.

The Human Development Report of 2016 highlights some aspects that we consider key to eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions. A phrase that echoes our vision and mission is that 'human development focuses on richness of human lives rather than on the richness of economies.'

Structural and systemic issues are the main challenges to the wellbeing of people and the planet. These are evident today with growing inequality within and among countries, the amassing of profit for personal and corporate gain to the detriment of human rights and environmental protection, growing fears with regard to world peace, the movement of large numbers of peoples in the face of climate change, natural disasters and human-made crisis, and the growing experience of exclusion and uncertainty of those who cross borders.

Coupled with the structural and systemic issues are mindsets that drive those in authority to use and abuse their power to maintain the status quo. These mindsets do not seek to leave no one behind, but rather to exploit, plunder, destroy, displace and kill people and the planet.

We as an organization work in local communities with people who experience multidimensional poverty — 'lingering deprivations', gender inequality and effects of climate change. Participatory exercises reveal that people living in poverty describe ill-being to include poor health, nutrition, lack of adequate sanitation and clean water, social exclusion, low education, bad housing conditions, violence, shame, disempowerment and much more. These are the very issues that the 2030 Agenda seeks to transform.

We urge the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) High-level Segment to encourage Member States:

- to engage in processes whereby people are actors, at the center of their own development
- to open spaces for respectful dialogue on 'controversial issues', discriminatory laws, and exclusionary social norms
- to encourage new thinking that promotes transformation at local, national, regional and global levels to ensure a sustainable future for all
- to use the data revolution and emerging technologies to advance people's well being

Some immediate applications:

- Implement a robust human rights-based, gender and age-responsive policy approach
- Reframe macroeconomic systems to tackle growing inequalities, and allocate resources to address basic deprivations including through implementation of national floors of social protection [International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation 202]

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